



Recommendation for Action

File #: 19-1883, **Agenda Item #:** 18.

6/6/2019

Posting Language

Authorize negotiation and execution of an interlocal cooperation agreement with Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization for the development of a corridor Platinum Planning study for the 6-mile-long rail corridor between Vinson Drive and US-183 known as the Bergstrom Spur, in an amount not to exceed \$70,000.

Lead Department

Public Works.

Fiscal Note

Funding is available from the 2016 Mobility Bond, Local Mobility, Urban Trails.

Prior Council Action:

September 25, 2014 - Council passed Ordinance No. 20140925-143 which adopted the Urban Trails Master Plan, including the Tier 1 trail, E Ben White Blvd. Rail Corridor also known as the Bergstrom Spur.

December 17, 2017 - Council passed Resolution No. 20171214-056 which authorized the submittal of a list of potential transportation projects for the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) 2019-2022 Call for Projects on a 10-0 vote with Council Member Troxclair off the dais.

For More Information:

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Additional Backup Information:

The Bergstrom Spur is an inactive rail corridor, approximately 6 miles long in south Austin. The Bergstrom Spur Corridor Study would evaluate the feasibility and costs of a very unique opportunity to install a transit service and urban trail within this limited 50-foot wide corridor which would directly connect south Austin to the Austin Bergstrom International Airport (ABIA).

The City of Austin Urban Trails Master Plan (UTMP) has identified the Bergstrom Spur (referred to as E. Ben White Blvd. Rail Corridor) as a Tier 1 Trail, which is the highest priority trail. The plan prioritized this route due to its ability to greatly enhance the accessibility to other urban trails in the southeast area including the Country Club Creek Trail and the shared-use path recently installed along Bastrop Hwy (TX-71).

Bergstrom Spur presents the unique opportunity to realize a critical east-west connection that, in the short-term, could serve as an urban trail accessible to users of all ages and abilities and, in the long-term, could serve as an optional route for High-Capacity Transit. This land is partially owned by the City of Austin, partially owned by Union Pacific Railroad, and partially owned by St. Edwards University. The connection that could be achieved using the Bergstrom Spur could create an invaluable asset that, if lost, might be near impossible to recover in the future, due to the often challenging task of acquiring land once it is private. The goal of this study would be to identify the possibility of both transit and trail options in this narrow corridor, identifying necessary right-of-way acquisition and determining overall costs of the full vision. Once the City of Austin and CAMPO have this information, partnering opportunities can be explored to turn this multi-modal vision into reality. The

next steps anticipated after this completion of the study are land acquisition, design, and construction.